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U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
**FACT CHECK**  
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## Huffington Post Report Filled with Biased and Misleading Claims

Yesterday, Huffington Post published a report filled with inaccuracies and misleading claims about U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler's career and tenure at EPA.



### Coal Baron Cuts Ties With Lobbying Firm As Ex-Lobbyist Andrew Wheeler Ascends At EPA

Murray Energy worked for Wheeler for years. Now that he's Trump's EPA nominee, the coal producer ended its contract with Wheeler's old lobbying firm.

#### HuffPost:

"It's possible that if Murray Energy goes to another firm, they could get a meeting before Wheeler personally," said Virginia Canter, chief ethics counsel at the nonpartisan watchdog Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington. "Another lobbying firm, if that's where they went, might be in a better position to move forward on Murray Energy's more immediate interests."

**FACT CHECK:** This accusation from the liberal interest group, Citizens for Responsible and Ethics in Washington (CREW), has no merit as Acting Administrator Wheeler, under the Trump Ethics Pledge and federal government ethics rules, would still be recused from meeting or working with Murray Energy in any capacity. CREW knowingly misinformed the public with their quote. You would think a group with ethics in its name would intimately know ethics rules.

Furthermore, CREW is nothing more than another David Brock project to attack the Trump Administration. In fact, in a [2017 memo presented](#) at a Democracy Alliance

meeting to sway ultra wealthy donors, former chairman of CREW David Brock outlined how "we are going to resist the normalization of Donald Trump" and further listed off

how a number of his affiliated groups including Media Matters for America, CREW, Shareblue, and American Bridge will lead the charge against the Trump Administration. The image below grouping the groups together was highlighted at the top of the memo:



**FACT CHECK:** This is FAR from “nonpartisan.”

This is not the first time a mainstream media outlet has attempted to highlight CREW as a “nonpartisan” or “watchdog” group to criticize the Trump EPA in their reporting.

### HuffPost:

Murray’s requests primarily targeted the EPA, urging draconian staff cuts, gutting a mercury regulation and reversing a bevy of standards on pollution ranging from ozone to toxic coal ash to planet-warming carbon dioxide emissions. Of eight EPA policies Murray asked to be changed, the Trump administration took action on six, most of which were carried out since Wheeler took charge of the agency, [Mother Jones](#) reported.

**FACT CHECK:** As Acting Administrator Wheeler has previously stated on the record ([here](#) and [here](#) among others), he did not have a role in crafting the Murray Action Plan.

Furthermore, Acting Administrator Wheeler has recused himself from meeting and working with Murray Energy for two years.

**FACT CHECK:** Acting Administrator Wheeler was only confirmed in his deputy role in

April 2018 and did not become acting head of the Agency until July 9, 2018. To claim these actions were only carried out under his direction is demonstrably false, as many reporters who have followed the Trump EPA should know.

## HuffPost:

committee, according to Center for Responsive Politics [data](#). In March 2017, Murray drafted a wishlist of policies submitted in the form of memos to the Energy Department — [leaked photos](#) show Wheeler, then a lobbyist, sitting beside the coal executive as he hugged Energy Secretary Rick Perry — and to Vice President Mike Pence.

**FACT CHECK:** This sentence is incredibly misleading to trick the reader into thinking Vice President Mike Pence was present in the meeting.